

# Lower Delaware Designated Wild & Scenic

## WHITE CLAY CREEK ALSO ADDED TO NATIONAL SYSTEM

The United States Congress gave its final approval to two bills in October 2000 that added a section of the lower Delaware River and the White Clay Creek to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. Both bills were signed into law by President Clinton.

Over three-quarters of the non-tidal Delaware River main stem are now included in the national system. In a congratulatory letter to U.S. Rep. Rush Holt (D-N.J.), President Clinton wrote:

*“As you know, the future of the Delaware River, the longest free-flowing river in the eastern United States, is vital to the economy of the regions surrounding this important waterway. Wild and Scenic River designation will encourage natural and historic resource preservation and protect precious open space. By allowing local municipalities to sustain and protect the Delaware River as one of our nation's national treasures, this law will help to ensure the vitality of these communities and the quality of life of their citizens.”*



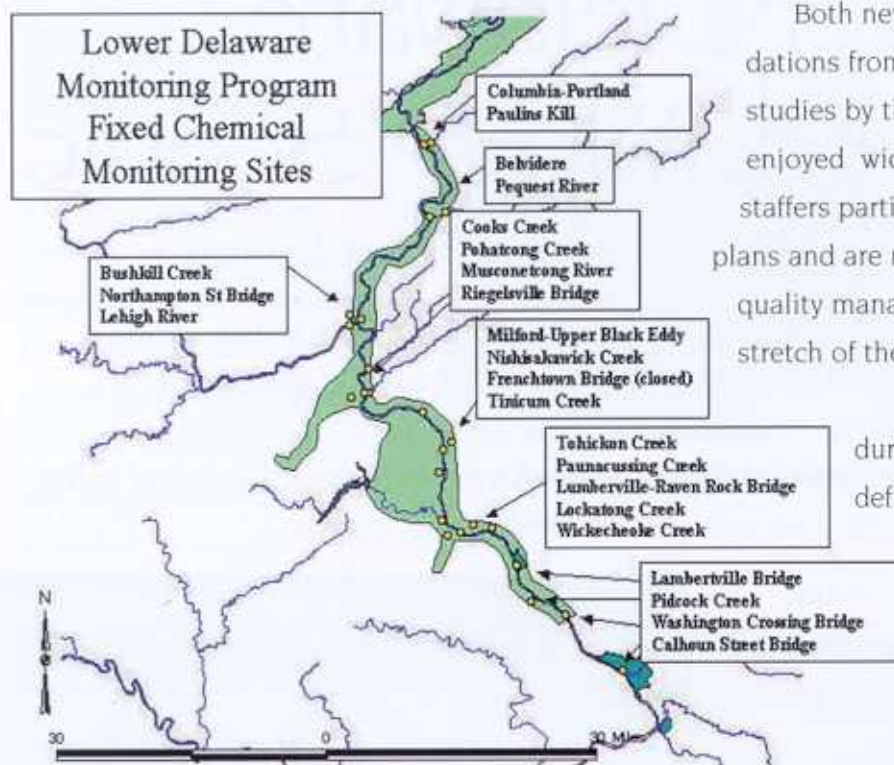
The Scenic Delaware

The Lower Delaware Wild and Scenic Rivers Act adds about 65 miles of the Delaware and selected tributaries to the national system, linking the Delaware Water Gap and Washington Crossing, Pa., just upstream of Trenton, N.J.

The White Clay Creek Wild and Scenic Rivers System Act designates approximately 190 miles of segments and tributaries of the White Clay Creek as components of the national system. The creek flows from southeastern Pennsylvania to northwestern Delaware and eventually joins the Christina River, a tributary to the Delaware River. It is the first wild and scenic river designation in the state of Delaware.



## National Wild & Scenic Rivers



Both new laws implement recommendations from earlier, congressionally mandated studies by the National Park Service, which enjoyed widespread local support. DRBC staffers participated in the development of both plans and are now engaged in developing a water quality management strategy for the designated stretch of the Lower Delaware River corridor.

Forty-two sites were monitored during the year 2000 to statistically define existing water quality. The monitoring data will be used to establish an anti-degradation program aimed at safeguarding public health and safety.

The sampling consists of two components: routine baseline

monitoring, including chemical and physical parameters; and biological monitoring.

According to the National Park Service, when Congress created the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System in 1968 it envisioned a cooperative system that would rely on the combined efforts of state, local, and federal government agencies along with individual citizens and non-governmental organizations. The system was intended to be flexible enough to provide a means for communities to protect their rivers in a way that is sensitive to the needs and concerns of the people who live, work, and recreate along the rivers.

The Lower Delaware bill was introduced by Sen. Frank Lautenberg (D-N.J.)<sup>\*</sup> and co-sponsored by Senators Rick Santorum (R-Pa.), Robert Torricelli (D-N.J.), and Arlen Specter (R-Pa.). Similar legislation was introduced and co-sponsored by U.S. Reps. Jim Greenwood (R-Pa.), Rush Holt, Marge Roukema (R-N.J.), Patrick Toomey (R-Pa.), Rob Andrews (D-N.J.), and Chaka Fattah (D-Pa.).

The White Clay Creek bill was introduced by Sen. Joseph Biden (D-Del.) and co-sponsored by Sen. William Roth (R-Del.)<sup>\*</sup> Similar legislation was introduced and co-sponsored by U.S. Reps. Joseph Pitts (R-Pa.), Michael Castle (R-Del.), and Rob Andrews.

Two reaches of the Delaware River totaling just over 100 miles were added to the national system in 1978. One section extends 73 miles from the confluence of the river's East and West branches at Hancock, N.Y. downstream to Milrift, Pa.; the second covers about 40 miles from just south of Port Jervis, N.Y. downstream to the Delaware Water Gap near Stroudsburg, Pa. Combined, these two river corridors take in approximately 125,000 acres.



## A Romantic Catch

A telltale chapter in the Delaware River's water quality success story occurred in 1981 when Fred Lewis, operator of the only commercial shad fishery on the non-tidal river, netted 6,392 shad. It was the biggest catch since 1896 when his father was running the business. These photos, taken on or near Lewis Island at Lambertville, N.J., where Shad Fest activities are held each year, show boatmen setting the net and cooks grilling shad fillets. The wood carving of a shad, displayed in the window of an antique shop, is emblematic of the local romance with a fish that once was a mainstay in the economy of this riverside town.

*(Photos by Robert J. Salgado, New Hope, Pa.)*

In addition, the Maurice River and several tributaries, including Menantico and Muskee Creeks and the Manumuskin River, were added to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System in 1993. The Maurice, located in New Jersey, is a Delaware Bay tributary.

*\* The terms for Senators Lautenberg and Roth expired in January 2001.*

